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THE SECOND PHASE OF THE GENEVA FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING
MAY 28, 1959-JUNE 19, 1959 - AN APPRAISAL

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Abstract

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The second phase of the 1959 Conference of Foreign Ministers at Geneva which covered the period from May 28, 1959 (following the recess for attendance by the Four Foreign Ministers at the Dulles' funeral) until the recess which began on June 19, was taken up almost exclusively with Berlin. Towards the end of the previous phase, on May 26, Secretary Herter had discussed in considerable detail specific Western proposals regarding Berlin related to the general proposals already presented in the Western Peace Plan. This had been done to enable the Four Foreign Ministers "to discuss the proposals in terms of the practical problems which will arise in carrying out the reunification of the city rather than in terms of abstract objectives thereto." The second phase of the Conference began with detailed discussions of Berlin and wider issues were pushed aside in an attempt to arrive at some sort of agreement on this restricted issue. Gromyko, of course, spoke purely in terms of West Berlin, and hammered away at the Soviet "free city" concept. The West, in an effort to meet Soviet objections, went so far as to offer specific concessions on troop strength (no increase), and non-interference on a basis of reciprocity.

On June 9-10, Gromyko introduced a new Soviet plan linking a provisional settlement of the Berlin question to a number of unacceptable conditions under the threat of a separate GDR-Soviet peace treaty at the end of a year. Following this, the Western Ministers tried to learn from Gromyko whether his time-limit threat was in fact ultimative in character, but with no success. On June 16, accordingly, the Western Ministers gave Gromyko the West's "final" proposals on Berlin which included possibilities for limitation or even

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reduction of troop strength and measures to avoid activities which might disturb public order (propaganda and subversive activities) in both parts of Berlin. These were not acceptable to Gromyko who on June 19 merely reiterated his earlier ambiguous proposals with a year and a half deadline instead of a year. The Western Ministers, feeling that the Conference was hopelessly deadlocked, but anxious not to break it off, proposed a three week recess to which the Soviets agreed.

In essence, the Soviet effort during this phase was to reduce the Western rights in Berlin by insisting on a termination of occupation status and in fact to preclude a return to the status quo ante following an interim arrangement on Berlin. The West, on the other hand, while willing to make concessions as to its troop strength in West Berlin and on propaganda emanating from West Berlin (on a reciprocal basis), was not willing to make any concessions regarding its right to be in Berlin.

This report should be read in conjunction with IR-8046, July 14, 1959, "The Soviet Position at Geneva - May 29 - June 20, 1959" and IR-8037, June 26, 1959, "The First Phase of the Geneva Foreign Ministers' Meeting, May 11 - May 26, 1959 - An Appraisal".

The New Phase - The Introduction of Restricted Sessions

The first phase of the Conference of Foreign Ministers in Geneva had ended on May 26, 1959 with Gromyko's agreement that the next phase, following the attendance of the Foreign Ministers at the Dulles' funeral rites in Washington, should be conducted in private, secret sessions (without the participation of the German advisors) as well as in the plenary type of meeting which had been used during the first part of the Conference. The first meeting of this type actually took place in the airplane on the way back to Geneva and more than half of the sessions until the June 19 recess were restricted in nature. The Western Powers had proposed the holding of the private sessions in an effort to take the Conference outside the limelight of propaganda so that some real negotiating progress might be made.

Developments During the Second Phase

The second phase of the Conference was distinguished from the initial phase not only by the type of meeting but by the participation of subject matter discussed. The first phase had encompassed general presentation of both Western and Soviet proposals with the West placing its major emphasis on the Western Peace Plan and the Soviets harping on the theme of peace treaties with Germany and immediate resolution of the "West Berlin problem" by changing the status of West Berlin to that of a demilitarized "free city".

The second phase of the Conference dealt almost exclusively with various aspects of an interim solution of the Berlin problem and in fact bogged down on this issue with no solution in sight when the recess was called on June 19.

The Berlin Discussions May 28-June 8

While there were no startling and unexpected developments in the discussion on Berlin until June 9, there were several worthy of mention. In a private meeting on May 29, for instance, Gromyko, while continuing to assert that the West should evacuate Berlin, suggested as a "compromise" that West Berlin might as an alternative be taken over by token forces of the Four (sic) powers or neutral powers. He asserted that merely maintaining the forces of the three Western Powers would be tantamount to recognizing a continuation of the status quo. The introduction of token forces into East Berlin, however, was out of the question since East Berlin was the capital of the GDR.

In a plenary session on May 30 Gromyko made clear that in the Soviet view the ideal solution to the West Berlin problem would be the extension of GDR sovereignty over all of the city of Berlin. In a rebuttal to Gromyko's speech, Lloyd noted that the "free" city proposal which the Soviets consider as a concession, would in fact create a third German state which would eventually be absorbed by the GDR. He noted that Gromyko's remark that the best solution would be absorption into the GDR was "food for serious thought", i.e., as indicative of Russia's real intentions.

At the private meeting of June 1, Gromyko in some detail outlined the guarantees of the status of the "free" city of West Berlin as envisaged by the Soviets. These would provide that 1) the Four Powers (or neutral states) should maintain small contingents of troops (not "occupation" troops), 2) a permanent international commission of the Four Powers and the GDR would supervise the observance of the "Free City" agreement, especially its demilitarization and the prohibition of hostile activities, 3) the commission would submit annual reports to the Four Powers, the GDR and the UN Security Council, and would inform the Four Powers of any violations or threats to violate the city's status, and 4) the Four Powers would, after consultation, take appropriate measures to ensure the observance of the status of the city.

In a plenary session on June 2, the East German Foreign Minister revealed his ignorance of the basis of the Four Powers' presence in Berlin. He claimed that both the European Advisory Commission and other Allied documents showed that Berlin was not intended to be a fifth occupation zone but rather to be part of the Soviet zone (and therefore all of it, in his view, is now included in the GDR). Secretary Herter suggested that Bolz' views could be brought into correct perspective by a review of the basic German surrender documents.

During the same session Gromyko, in claiming that the occupation of Berlin had become artificial and obsolete, stated that the Soviets did not consider Western troops were presently there illegally. Secretary Herter in the plenary session of June 5 made reference to this statement quoting Gromyko as having said, "We do not consider that the troops of the US, the UK and France have turned up in Berlin by some sort of illegal means." Secretary Herter felt that this was "a constructive if somewhat tardy recognition by the USSR of our established and legitimate rights."

On June 3, in a private session, Lloyd set forth the reasons for the Western rejection of the Gromyko proposals, saying that: 1) they seemed to extinguish all Allied rights in Berlin; 2) a third state would be established on German soil; 3) there was nothing said about East Berlin (and hence no solution of the Berlin problem); 4) Soviet troops would be introduced into West Berlin with no corresponding provision as to East Berlin; 5) the GDR would be associated with the agreement by being included in the proposed commission; 6) no provision is made for free political life and economic stability in West Berlin or access to it. The West Foreign Ministers then made clear that any agreement on Berlin (1) must have as its framework the rights the West now has in Berlin; 2) could not envisage GDR participation or Soviet troops in West Berlin; 3) could not be limited to West Berlin. Couve de Murville went on to say that under certain conditions the Western Powers could be prepared to declare their intention not to increase the present level of their forces in Berlin and that they would be prepared to consider ways in which, in the greater Berlin area and while respecting fundamental rights and liberties, arrangements might be made to avoid illegal or clandestine activities which might disturb public order or affect the interests of the different parties. The Western Powers would also be prepared to examine Soviet proposals for the modification of procedures regarding access arrangements. Arrangements which might be agreed would continue in force until the reunification of Germany.

In the discussion which followed it appeared that Gromyko was willing that the arrangements within the framework of the Soviet Berlin proposal should continue in force until the reunification of Germany. With regard to the control of Allied military traffic the Soviets envisaged substituting Germans for Russians, but would guarantee the access rights of the Western Powers under a new agreement with which the GDR would be associated. The Western Powers were unable to elicit from Gromyko what he meant by this and were unable to determine to whom the Western Powers would go if difficulties over access were to arise. Gromyko added, however, that he did not accept the GDR as agents for the Soviets and noted that the Soviet proposal on access was within the framework of the Soviet Berlin "free city" proposals.

In the next private meeting on June 4, Gromyko amplified his proposals of the previous session saying that any new arrangements reached could take the form of an agreement, by protocol or a declaration, and that the question of rights might not be mentioned; there might be simply an agreement

reached on specific arrangements; there was no question of new arrangements applying to both East and West Berlin; and he indicated that token troop units of the Allied Powers might be on the order of a platoon for each Power.

The Western Powers emphasized once again the need to acknowledge Western rights and attempted unsuccessfully to get Gromyko to discuss the point concerning arrangements in all Berlin for the avoidance of clandestine activities. Gromyko persisted in talking about arrangements in West Berlin alone.

In a later private meeting on June 4, in reply to a complaint by Gromyko that the West was offering no real concession on Berlin, Lloyd listed three possible concessions which the West had held out: 1) a declaration of its intention not to increase the present level of forces stationed in Berlin; 2) noninterference on a basis of reciprocity; 3) willingness to consider a modification of the procedures for access to Berlin. On June 8 (private session) the West again set forth its views on Berlin: 1) Western rights in Berlin must be maintained and the Soviet Government must accept this. There could, however, be new supplementary arrangements; 2) the Western Powers could accept the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Berlin and could declare their intention not to increase the combined total of their own forces in the city. They could also declare that they might be able to reduce their forces to the extent that developments in Berlin and maintenance of their responsibilities might permit; 3) measures consistent with fundamental rights and liberties could be taken in both parts of Berlin to avoid activities which might disturb public order or seriously affect the rights and interests of the different parties; 4) continuing rights of access to Berlin, both Allied and German, must be recognized by the Soviet Government. So must free access between East and West Berlin. Access procedure could be carried out by German personnel on the understanding that existing responsibilities remained unchanged. Disputes on access should be settled between the four governments who could establish a quadripartite commission in Berlin to facilitate settlement of such disputes; 5) any arrangements agreed on would be in force until German reunification.

Gromyko's New Proposals on Berlin-June 9 and June 10

At the private session of June 9 Gromyko presented orally new Soviet proposals regarding Berlin which he again discussed at the plenary session of June 10. The proposals were:

The USSR is prepared to agree not to insist on an immediate and complete abolition of the occupation regime in West Berlin, provided, however, that such a continuation of the occupation should be limited to one year. During this year the two German states would implement measures connected with the setting up of an all-German committee composed of representatives

of the GDR and the FRG on a parity basis. The committee should promote the extension and development of contacts between the GDR and the GFR and discuss and work out specific measures for the unification of Germany; it should also examine the questions relating to the preparation and conclusion of a peace treaty with Germany. Failure to reach an agreement during the year would result in the USSR signing a separate peace treaty with the GDR.

The Soviets would be willing during this year to recognize certain Western occupation rights with the following provisions: 1) the Western Powers shall reduce the strength of their armed forces and armaments in West Berlin to symbolic contingents; 2) any hostile propaganda against the GDR and other Socialist countries from the territory of West Berlin shall be stopped; 3) all the organization in West Berlin engaged in espionage and subversive activities against the GDR, the USSR and other Socialist countries shall be liquidated; 4) the Western Powers shall undertake not to deploy any atomic or missile installations in West Berlin.

At the plenary session of June 10 Secretary Herter commented fully on the new proposals, saying that they were wholly unacceptable to the US on two grounds: substance and their threatening nature. Secretary Herter stated that in his view the 11,000 Allied troops in West Berlin could only be described as symbolic and that Gromyko on several occasions stated that they had no military significance. Yet now Gromyko wants them to be drastically reduced. Secretary Herter went on to say that the US had no intention of curtailing freedom of speech in West Berlin but that consistent with this freedom, the US would be willing to engage in reciprocal measures to reduce tension arising from propaganda media. With regard to subversive and espionage activities the West would be willing on a reciprocal basis to use its best efforts to discourage activities which might threaten public order.

As to the threatening nature of the proposals with the one year time limit, Secretary Herter stated that the US obviously could not accept a time limit of twelve months for the life expectancy of the rights which the West acquired as a result of the capitulation of Hitler's Germany. He stated that these are "rights which we retain and will feel free to exercise as long as Germany is divided and the free people of West Berlin look to us for their protection." He went on to say that the USSR should know by now that the US will never negotiate under deadlines, threats, or duress.

Underlining the views which he had expressed in the June 10 plenary session, Secretary Herter on June 11 talked privately with Gromyko and told him that the following principles must be the basis for any negotiation:

1) they cannot be held under threat nor could a summit meeting; 2) the Allies have certain rights and the Soviets certain obligations with respect to Berlin which cannot be unilaterally abrogated but only modified by common consent; 3) the West Berliners regard the Western Powers not as occupiers but as protectors against surrounding hostile forces. With reference to the Allied occupation rights in West Berlin, Gromyko said that the Soviets and the GDR did not like them and could not agree to their indefinite continuance and repeated his arguments in favor of the "free city" proposal, saying that it was "a good way out for the West". He stated that the proposals did not constitute an ultimatum and that he understood that the Western Powers could not negotiate under threat. Secretary Herter said that the West could not accept the Soviet position that reunification was a matter exclusively for the Germans nor could it agree to the unilateral extinction of its legal rights in Berlin. The meeting ended with Gromyko denying that the Soviet proposals had been intended to end the Foreign Ministers' Conference.

As this meeting with Gromyko had still not clarified whether the Soviets really were posing an ultimatum or not, Secretary Herter at the June 12 plenary session asked Gromyko for clarification regarding the new Soviet proposals and the threat of the time limit so that the West would know where it stood from the point of view of any continuation of the discussions.

Gromyko then reiterated his assertion that the Soviet proposals contained no threat and that they had been put forward to "facilitate the liquidation of the outdated occupation regime". However, he went on to repeat that the West must realize that the Soviets and the GDR do not like the occupation regime and desire new arrangements. He stated that the Soviets could not sign an agreement which perpetuated the occupation regime.

At the same session Lloyd in discussing the Western rights in Berlin noted that rights can be of two kinds, those flowing from a basic position, e.g., the capitulation of Nazi Germany, and secondly, rights flowing from specific agreements, i.e. contractual agreements. He said that the Western Powers have both types of rights with regard to West Berlin.

The Western "Final" Proposals on Berlin-June 16

On June 16 at a private meeting the Western Powers presented new proposals on Berlin:

They recognized..that pending reunification, the existing situation and the agreements at present in force can be modified..and have consequently agreed upon the following:
a) the Soviet Foreign Minister has made known the decision of the Soviet Government no longer to maintain forces in Berlin. The Foreign Ministers of France, the United Kingdom and the United States declare that it is the intention of their governments to limit the combined total of their forces in Berlin to the present figure (approximately 11,000) and to continue to arm these forces only with conventional weapons as at present. The three Ministers

further declare that their governments will from time to time consider the possibility of reducing such forces if developments in the situation permit; b) the Ministers agreed that there shall continue to be free and unrestricted access to West Berlin by land, by water and by air for all persons, goods and communications, including those of the French, UK and US forces stationed in West Berlin. The procedures applicable shall be those in effect in April 1959. However, without prejudice to existing basic responsibilities, these procedures may, where it is not already the case, be carried out by German personnel.

The Ministers likewise reaffirmed that freedom of movement will continue to be maintained between East and West Berlin.

All disputes which might arise with respect to access will be raised and settled between the four governments. The latter will establish a quadripartite commission which will meet in Berlin to examine any difficulties arising out of the application of the present subparagraph and to facilitate their settlement. The Commission may make arrangements, if necessary, to consult German experts.

The Ministers consider that measures should be taken consistent with fundamental rights and liberties to avoid in both parts of Berlin activities which might either disturb public order or seriously affect the rights and interests, or amount to interference in the internal affairs, of others.

The Ministers agreed that unless subsequently modified by four power agreement these arrangements will continue in force until the reunification of Germany.

At the next private meeting on June 17, Gromyko raised the question of the strength of Western forces in Berlin. He said that the new Western proposals would leave the present strength of those forces intact, and they could therefore not be regarded as symbolic forces. Introducing a new concept of "symbolic forces" he suggested that the Soviets thought that a total of three or four thousand could be considered symbolic. He had no further remarks to make about the Western proposals.

At a private meeting on the last day of the Conference before the recess (June 19), Gromyko proposed extending the time limit set for his June 9-10 proposals to eighteen months instead of one year. He elaborated by saying that "if during the agreed period no solution of the questions of a peace

treaty with Germany and the unification of Germany can be reached within the framework of an all-German committee or otherwise, then the participants of the Geneva Conference of Foreign Ministers of 1959 could resume the consideration of the West Berlin question.

On June 19, the Western Powers issued a statement regarding the course of negotiations and the reasons for the recess. They pointed out that the Soviet proposal of June 9-10 and June 19 revealed a clear Soviet intention that "the Western Powers upon signing such an agreement would acquiesce in the liquidation of their rights in Berlin and the abandonment of their responsibility for maintaining the freedom of the people of West Berlin." The recess, it was stated, would give the Soviet Government the opportunity of considering the Western proposals further.

Other Themes Than Berlin - Polish-Czech Participation

Several themes other than Berlin came up during the second phase of the Conference though only in a peripheral manner. During the private meeting of June 3, for example, Gromyko once again raised the matter of Polish-Czech participation in the Conference. His remarks were brief, however, and confined to saying that he regretted the Western attitude and that he wished to keep the matter open.

The All-German Committee - Soviet Insistence on Parity

In the same meeting Gromyko also reverted to the matter of an all-German committee. He maintained that it should be established by the Germans themselves although the Four Powers could recommend to the Germans that this action be taken. He insisted that the committee must be constituted on a parity basis. The 25-10 ratio was unacceptable. In response to a query from Secretary Herter, Gromyko stated that if the committee disagreed there would be no question of submitting to elections.

Soviet Statement That Some Aspects of Western Peace Plan Could be Considered- June 5

In the plenary session of June 5 Secretary Herter referred to Khrushchev's statement (in his May 31 speech in Albania) that "the 7-point plan tabled by Mr. Herter does not contain a single element for negotiation." Gromyko said that Khrushchev was speaking of Western proposals on Berlin and had said elsewhere that there are elements in the Western plan which deserve attention if not made contingent on other points like reunification.

Bolz on a Non-aggression Pact Between the Two "Germanies" - June 5

Bolz of the East German delegation noted that during his remarks Gromyko had referred to a non-aggression pact, and said that the GDR would welcome such a pact, noting that Ulbricht had offered to conclude one with Adenauer. Bolz said that he had informed von Brentano in Geneva that he was willing to begin negotiations with the Federal Republic at any time.

The Western Peace Plan - June 5

At another point in his speech Secretary Herter referred back to the Western Peace Plan, saying that the plan makes provision for the gradual reunification of Germany, European security and concomitant arms control moves, together with an interim Berlin solution.

Gromyko on the One-year Deadline and Allied "Threat" with Japanese Peace Treaty - June 9

At the private session of June 9, when the West protested at the threatening aspect of Gromyko's proposals with the one-year deadline, Gromyko brought up the matter of the Japanese Peace Treaty, alleging that in concluding this treaty the West had carried out a threat against the USSR. Lloyd retorted that the Japanese Peace Treaty fully reserved the rights and interests of the Soviets and asked what would happen to the rights and interests of the Western Powers in Berlin. After some hesitation Gromyko declared that when a treaty was concluded with the GDR, the GDR would exercise its full sovereign rights in all of its territory, including Berlin.

Gromyko on a Summit Conference - June 12

At the plenary session of June 12, Gromyko discussed the terms under which a summit conference might be convoked. He noted that some people would make a summit conference contingent upon agreement at the present conference. The Soviet Government, he said believes that a summit conference must not be approached from positions of bargaining or any deals. The Soviet Government considers that there is no link between the results of the Geneva Foreign Ministers' Conference and the convening of a summit meeting.

Discussion of Disarmament Talks in the UN - June 17

At the private meeting of June 17 there was some discussion of procedures for resuming disarmament negotiations. Secretary Herter suggested that it would be useful for the Four Powers to instruct their permanent delegates in New York to discuss the appointment of a committee which would be smaller than the 82-member committee. Gromyko asked why this could not be discussed by the Four Foreign Ministers in Geneva, and the West replied that since the matter was already in the UN, it seemed appropriate to continue it in New York. The West proposed making a Four Power approach to the UICG. Gromyko took note of the idea and said that he would reply later.

Complementary Soviet Activity Away from Geneva

Both the Soviet leaders and their minions, the East German Government officials, made a number of speeches during the second phase of the Conference which were designed, both as to timing and content, to complement Soviet activity at the Conference.

Several of the themes which were brought up "off-stage" were the same as those which the Soviets hammered away at in the Conference, and several received repeated emphasis.

A concerted effort was made throughout the period to ascribe militaristic intentions and aspirations to the Federal Republic and its leaders. Khrushchev made such an attack in his May 31 speech in Albania and used the occasion to point out the gullibility of the French in supporting the military rearming of West Germany. In his speech in Budapest on June 6, Khrushchev once again lashed out at the German generals. Ulbricht on the same day in Dresden said that the East German Government "aims primarily at foiling by every means at their disposal the plans of the Bonn Government which has created and is creating in West Germany and West Berlin starting points of a war of Germans against Germans and of a third world war." The same theme recurs in the speeches by Khrushchev and Grotewohl at Riga on June 11, and again in the June 19 speeches at the Kremlin, e.g., Khrushchev, "Recent events show that the danger of German militarism in the Federal Republic is growing daily." Ulbricht also took the same line.

Along with this effort to create an image of a militaristic Western Germany was an effort to discredit West German policy and its leaders. Not only did Khrushchev and Ulbricht decry Adenauer and Strauss as dangerous militarists but Khrushchev heaped ridicule on Adenauer in connection with his decision to retain the chancellorship (Kremlin speech, June 19). With regard to policy, the East German Communist organ Neues Deutschland on June 9 (the day that Gromyko presented his one-year ultimatum to the Western Foreign Ministers) produced a list of "Bonn's lost positions":

- 1) The claim to speak as the only legitimate German representatives in the international arena;
- 2) The thesis that the GDR is non-existent--because in the Geneva Conference the GDR has been given de facto recognition by the Western Powers who are negotiating with it;
- 3) The fact that Bonn's militarism and "revanchism" have become the subject of international debate at Geneva;
- 4) Bonn's claim to West Berlin--rejected by the Western Powers;
- 5) Bonn's thesis that no political contact with the non-existent GDR is possible--the Western Powers themselves have proposed the establishment of an all-German commission.

Another oft-repeated theme was that the outcome of the Geneva Conference should not determine whether or not a summit conference would be held.

Khrushchev argued (June 6, Budapest, June 19, Moscow) that the failure of the Conference would make a summit meeting more necessary than before. In an effort to turn the tables, Khrushchev asserted in his June 19 speech that the West's condition that a summit conference would only be possible if there were some progress at Geneva was an "ultimatum-like threat."

There were several other points made in various Bloc statements, which were not made on a repetitive basis, nor as a part of a planned propaganda effort, which nonetheless have some significance. Ulbricht, for example, just as the Conference was about to reconvene on May 29, gave an interview to the UPI in which he insisted on the GDR's sovereignty in controlling the access routes to West Berlin. He also harped on the "provocations, disturbances and agent activities" in West Berlin.

In his June 19 speech, Khrushchev claimed that the time limit proposed by Gromyko on June 9-10 did not have the character of an ultimatum. He then went on to say that the best solution would be the conclusion of a treaty with an all-German government, but that in default of this the only alternative was to conclude peace treaties with each of the two "Germanies." He also rebuked the West for charging the Soviet Union with unilateral action with regard to signing a separate peace treaty, recalling the treaty which the West had concluded with Japan.

In this same speech Khrushchev admitted that the right of the Western Powers to be in Berlin "stems from the capitulation of Hitlerite Germany in the last war". He then reverted to the usual Soviet approach that an occupation could not last forever and that the West's position in West Berlin was outmoded.

During his Kremlin speech of June 19, made during the last day of the East German visit to the USSR and therefore at a time when some gesture of special friendship for the GDR might have been expected, Khrushchev merely reiterated that the Soviet Union intended to conclude the German peace treaty. He gave no date. Likewise in the communiqué which followed the termination of the visit, the "governments of the Soviet Union and the GDR declare that they will carry on the struggle for conclusion of a German peace treaty."

In one of the few mismanaged "off-stage" activities of the Soviet propaganda effort, East German General Hoffmann held an international press conference, against existing rules, in Geneva in which he made a vicious attack on West German political and military leaders. This misuse of Swiss press facilities was greatly resented by the Swiss press.

Events in the West Having a Bearing on the Berlin Crisis and the Geneva Conference

During the recess occasioned by the funeral rites for Mr. Dulles the Four Foreign Ministers were all in Washington. President Eisenhower took this opportunity to discuss the developments of the Conference and to express his

hope that the outcome would show enough progress to justify a summit meeting.

On June 1, the London Times printed a story that Macmillan wished to replace Foreign Secretary Lloyd (because of his poor health). This was widely interpreted as having caused considerable damage to Lloyd's prestige at Geneva, and as a result the British Government made every effort to deny the story.

Three days later, on June 4, Chancellor Adenauer announced that he had given up his plan to run as the CDU candidate for the Presidency of the Federal Republic. There followed a long period of controversy between the Erhard and Adenauer factions of the CDU which was only partially brought to a halt by the nomination on June 15 of Heinrich Luebke as the party's candidate. The obvious preoccupation of the West German Government with this domestic political controversy meant that West German participation in the Conference suffered prestige damage and apparently received few, if any, practical instructions from Bonn on a current basis. As a parallel to the controversy itself there was the question of where the Presidential election would take place. In October 1958, prior to the initiation of the present Berlin crisis by the Soviet Union, the President of the Bundestag, Eugen Gerstenmaier, had announced that he hoped to have the election held in West Berlin on July 1, 1959. As the time for the election drew near there was more and more doubt expressed in some quarters (including the Chancellor himself) as to the wisdom of holding the election there since it was thought that this might be regarded as a provocative gesture by the Soviets. In fact, Chancellor Adenauer persuaded Gerstenmaier to wait until the recess before announcing a decision. Once the recess was called, however, Gerstenmaier lost no time in announcing that the election would take place in West Berlin as originally planned.

During the first part of June the unofficial Atlantic Congress, a body of representatives from NATO countries, met in London and by its pronouncements made it clear that Parliamentarians from NATO countries were solidly behind the Three Western Powers and West Germany in their support of West Berlin.

The recessing of the Conference was suggested by Chancellor Adenauer on June 13 (for a period of four weeks). It is not clear whether he thought this time should be used for shoring up Western political defenses, for if he had this in mind, he himself took no special actions of this kind.

Appraisal

In terms of the stated principal general objective of the West (see IF 8037, p.2, June 26, 1959), namely, to conduct serious negotiation with the USSR leading to an agreement, "even if the agreement has as its only result to help make the status quo livable for a period of years," there was no

progress whatsoever during the second phase of the Geneva Conference. Nor did the Soviets have any success in persuading the West to recognize the East German regime and to accept the Soviet peace treaty proposals. The Soviets appear to have made some progress towards their minimum goal of inducing the West to make some concession regarding the status of Berlin.

That this was likely to be the case was almost inevitable once the Conference theme had been narrowed to the subject of the status of Berlin. A discussion confined to Berlin leaves no road open to the West but that of making apparent concessions or simply standing pat. The geographic location of the city, surrounded as it is by hostile troops, leaves the West without any leverage. There is no effective way in which the West can extract counter-concessions in a discussion confined to Berlin alone.

As a result, as the Conference progressed during the second phase, the West showed a reluctant willingness to make certain minimum concessions with regard to 1) troop strength and 2) propaganda and "subversive" activities. In return for those concessions the West demanded that Berlin's status remain otherwise unchanged pending German reunification. The Soviets, however, wished to extract a further humiliating and totally unacceptable concession, the termination of the West's position in Berlin after a period of eighteenth months. This condition, stated in typical equivocal Soviet terms was described as not being an ultimatum or threat. Gromyko merely explained, somewhat enigmatically, that if following the eighteen-month period no solution on a peace treaty had been reached by an all-German committee, the Conference of Foreign Ministers could resume consideration of the West Berlin question. It was at this impasse that the Conference recessed.

The key to any estimate of the West's concessions on Berlin is the time factor. Such minor concessions as the West might make, would only be made if the status of Berlin is otherwise unchanged until German reunification. Thus the West relates the solution of Berlin to a solution of the German problem as a whole. Although this phase of the Conference was taken up with efforts to reach an interim solution on Berlin, the interim for the West is not in terms of an arbitrarily fixed period of time such as the Soviets have in mind, but in terms of maintenance of a status quo (minus) until such time as the German problem as a whole is resolved. Viewed in these terms, the "concessions" made by the West on Berlin are far less grave than they would be if the West were not insisting on the maintenance of its rights in Berlin pending a German solution.

In making the decision to confine the discussions of the second phase to an interim solution on Berlin, the West was motivated by a desire to avoid a complete breakdown of the Conference. The first phase had ended with a complete deadlock on the larger issues - the Western Peace Plan and the Soviet peace treaty proposals. By reducing the scope of the conversations to the acute problem, (which had only become acute because of the Soviet initiative last November), the West hoped to make some progress, even if limited, in reaching an agreement with the Soviets which would remove from the European scene the atmosphere of crisis and threat of war. It was the only available

alternative to calling the Soviet bluff (by letting the Conference collapse at the end of the first phase). (Also possible would have been resort to a Summit Meeting but at this point in the Conference this would not have been likely in view of the United States' adamant refusal to go to the Summit without progress at the Foreign Ministers' Meeting.) Calling the Soviet bluff, with its implied risk of force and threat of an outbreak of global war, was something the West was not willing to do. The situation had not reached such a critical stage that the continuation of negotiations in itself would represent an unacceptable concession by the West, and the West was eager to convince the public, particularly in Western countries, that every effort was being made to reach a reasonable decision.

Just as the first phase of the Conference had ended with no meeting of the minds on the broader issues, likewise the second phase came to a dead end on Berlin. The West suggested the recess, to which the Soviets agreed, in the hope that the recess "would give the Soviet Government the opportunity of considering the Western proposals further." The West also wanted time to study the significance of Khrushchev's June 19 speech in which he termed the West's proposals of June 16 "groundless and unacceptable." In this same speech Khrushchev had continued the enigmatic line taken by Gromyko that the Soviet proposal of a time limit does not carry the threat of an ultimatum. This theme came to be the standard Soviet line, for on June 28, Gromyko once again enlarged upon it without, however, making a really specific commitment that the West's rights in Berlin would still be intact and that the situation would be a return to the status quo ante if the all-German committee reached a decision after eighteen months.

In his press conference of July 9, Secretary Herter noted that Gromyko had objected to the West's assumption that if the West entered into any interim agreement with respect to Berlin and then resumed negotiations at the expiration of the term of the agreement that the West would have forfeited its occupation rights. Secretary Herter also noted that both Khrushchev and Gromyko had said that the period of time during which the interim agreement should last was also subject to negotiation. He said that clarification on these points would be necessary as soon as the Conference reconvened on July 13.

It was in this uncertain atmosphere that the Conference prepared to reconvene. The West held no special meetings during the recess and there were no special missions from one Western capital to another to discuss the Conference problems. The impression was gained that the West had gone its ultimate limit on the Berlin question in its June 16 proposals and had no need for further internal discussions.